



What is the United States doing to keep elections fair in the future?



- PEOPLE IN UNIVERSITY PARK, MARYLAND, WAITED HOURS TO VOTE IN THE 2008 ELECTION.

One of the important lessons of the extremely close 2000 presidential election was that the election administration, balloting and vote-counting challenges encountered in Florida could have occurred almost anywhere in the United States. Several studies were commissioned, and a variety of panels heard expert witnesses and took testimony about the need for reform.

In 2002, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act to address the problems of the 2000 election and anticipate new ones. First, the federal government funded state and local efforts to replace outdated punch-card and lever voting machines. Second, it established the Election Assistance Commission to afford local election technical assistance and to help local officials establish voting device standards. The commission studies voting machine and ballot design, registration and provisional voting methods, techniques for deterring fraud, procedures for recruiting and training poll workers, and voter education programs.

The Help America Vote Act marks a significant expansion of the federal government's role in a matter traditionally left to localities. But the reforms introduced have helped restore faith in the U.S. election process.